

## Finding Key Words/Phrases

Before beginning to sort through databases, card catalogs, and internet sites, it is helpful to have collection or key words or phrases with which to search. The research question may be too wordy to search as a whole, there may be some secondary concerns that need exploring, or there may be prominent examples which warrant attention.

In short, there are many reasons to be well-prepared before actually beginning the research journey, but the most important is focus. Particularly if the topic is of interest, there is the tendency to be distracted; completing the following activity will help you avoid the pitfalls of unfocused research.

**Exercise:**

Using the information provided, your research question, and your prior knowledge, fill in the chart below with words and phrases related to your research.

<b>OTHER WAYS TO SAY IT</b> (synonyms, alternative words, related words)	<b>LARGER TOPICS</b> (broader subjects that your research into which your research may fall)	<b>ASSOCIATED ITEMS</b> (people, places, things that could be linked to your research)

**REMEMBER:** The research process is just that, a process. Your key word/phrases chart may evolve as begin your research; you may need to add or delete information.